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# Pathways Project Workshop

## 15 February 2016

*Pathways to power: IO MPs' Access to  
Positions of Parliamentary Influence*

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**DFG** Deutsche  
Forschungsgemeinschaft



**NWO**  
Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research



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# The Internal Organizational of Legislatures

- Legislators are equally powerful in the plenary
- Internal organization of legislatures: “allocation of resources and assignment of parliamentary rights to individual legislators or groups of legislators” (Krehbiel 1991: 2)
- Ultimately, this “defines a set of privileged groups, sub-groups of parliamentarians with specific powers, a set of procedures that specify the powers of these sub-groups with respect to the functions that legislatures perform” (Strøm 1998: 23)



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# Defining 'Influence' in Legislatures

- Process of internal organization creates a twofold differentiation:
  - Vertical – hierarchical differentiation, in which some legislators are embodied with leadership functions, such as committee chairs and vice-chairs, whips, presidium positions
  - Horizontal – labor division promotion and specialization, with a win-win situation for legislators and the party



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# Micro-Level Explanations for Accessing Positions of Influence

- Seniority
- Incumbency
- Expertise

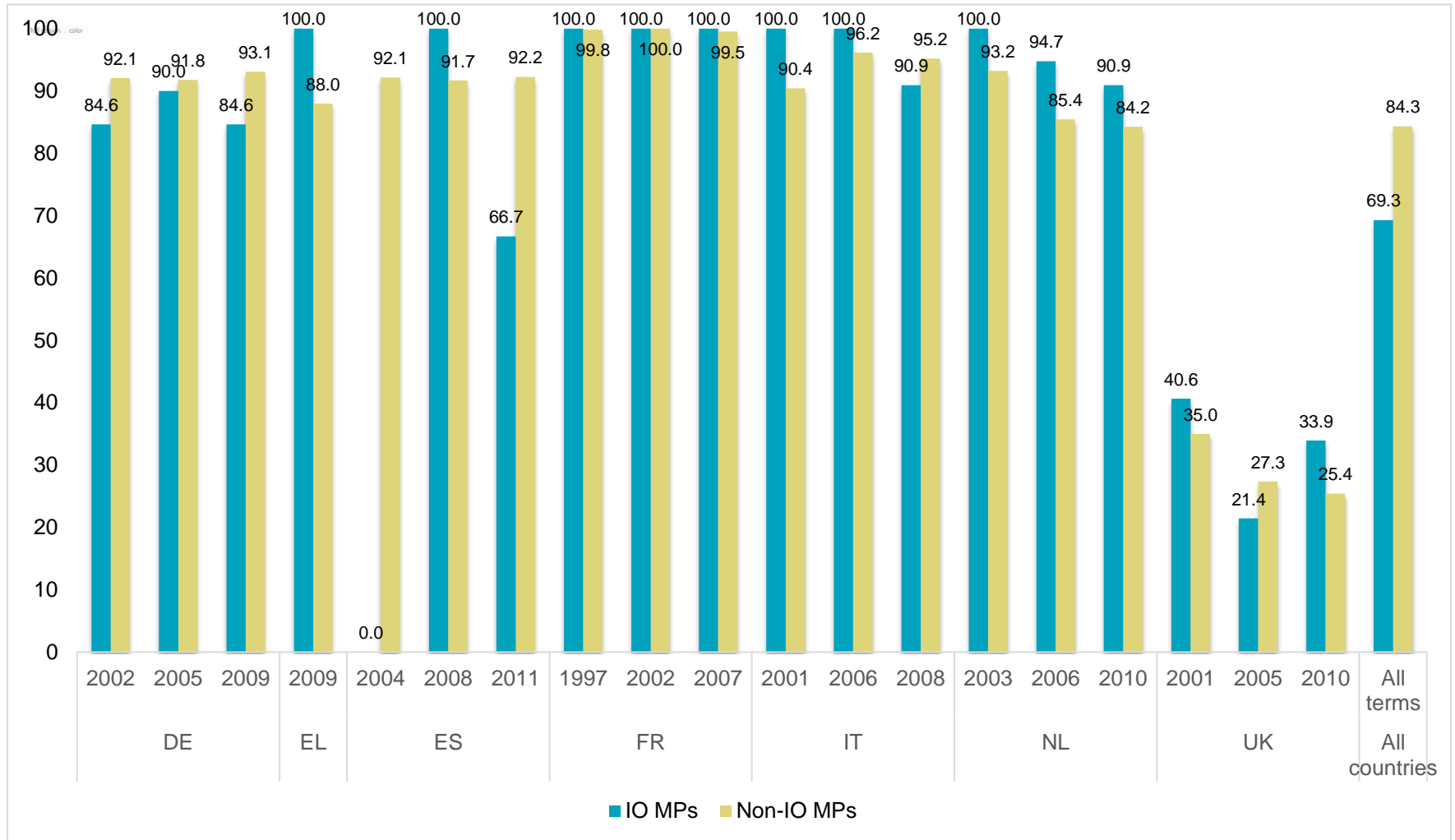


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How do MPs of immigrant origin compare to  
MPs of non-immigrant origin in gaining  
access to positions of influence?

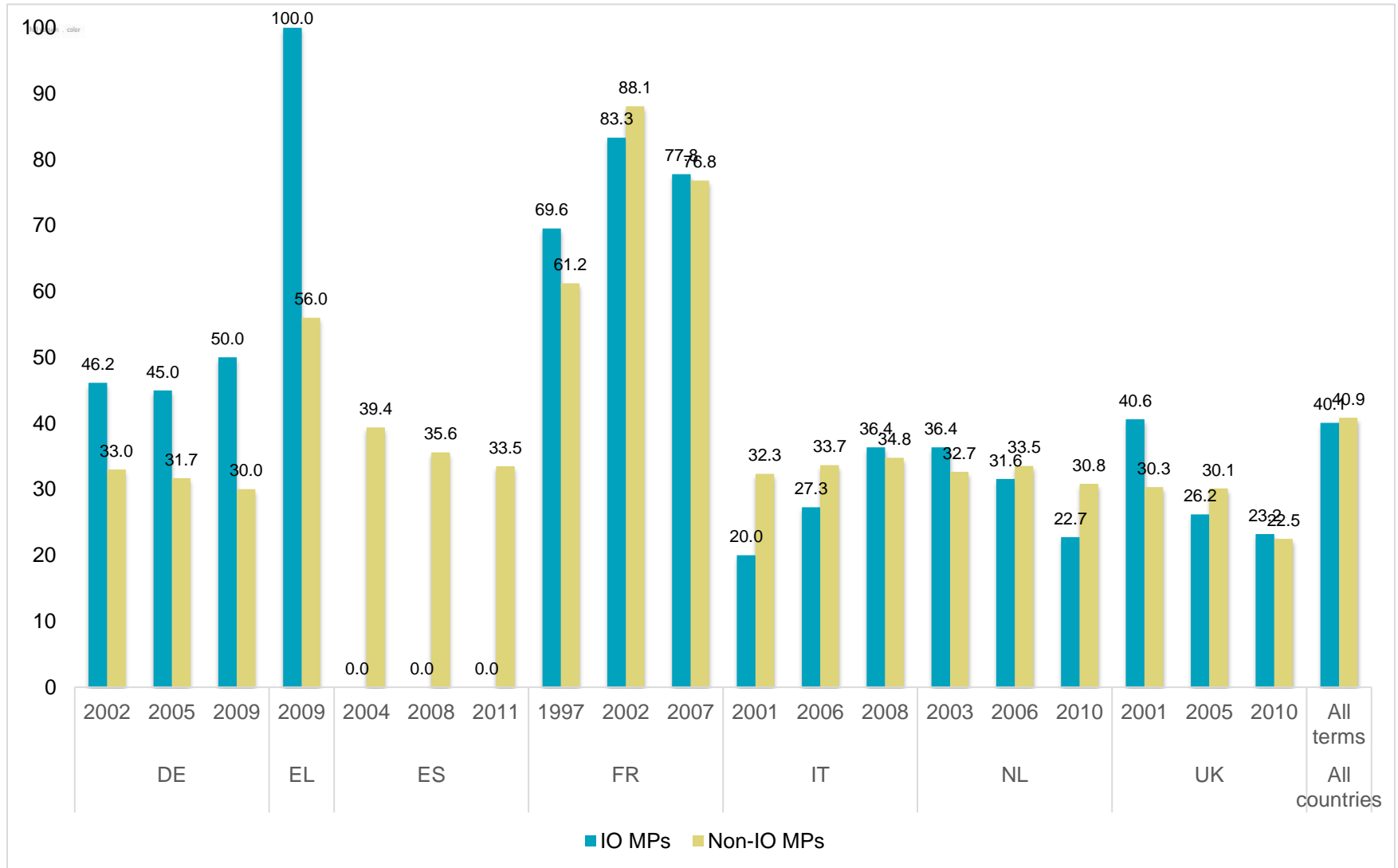


## Access of IO MPs and non-IO MPs to Most Relevant Committees (in percentage)



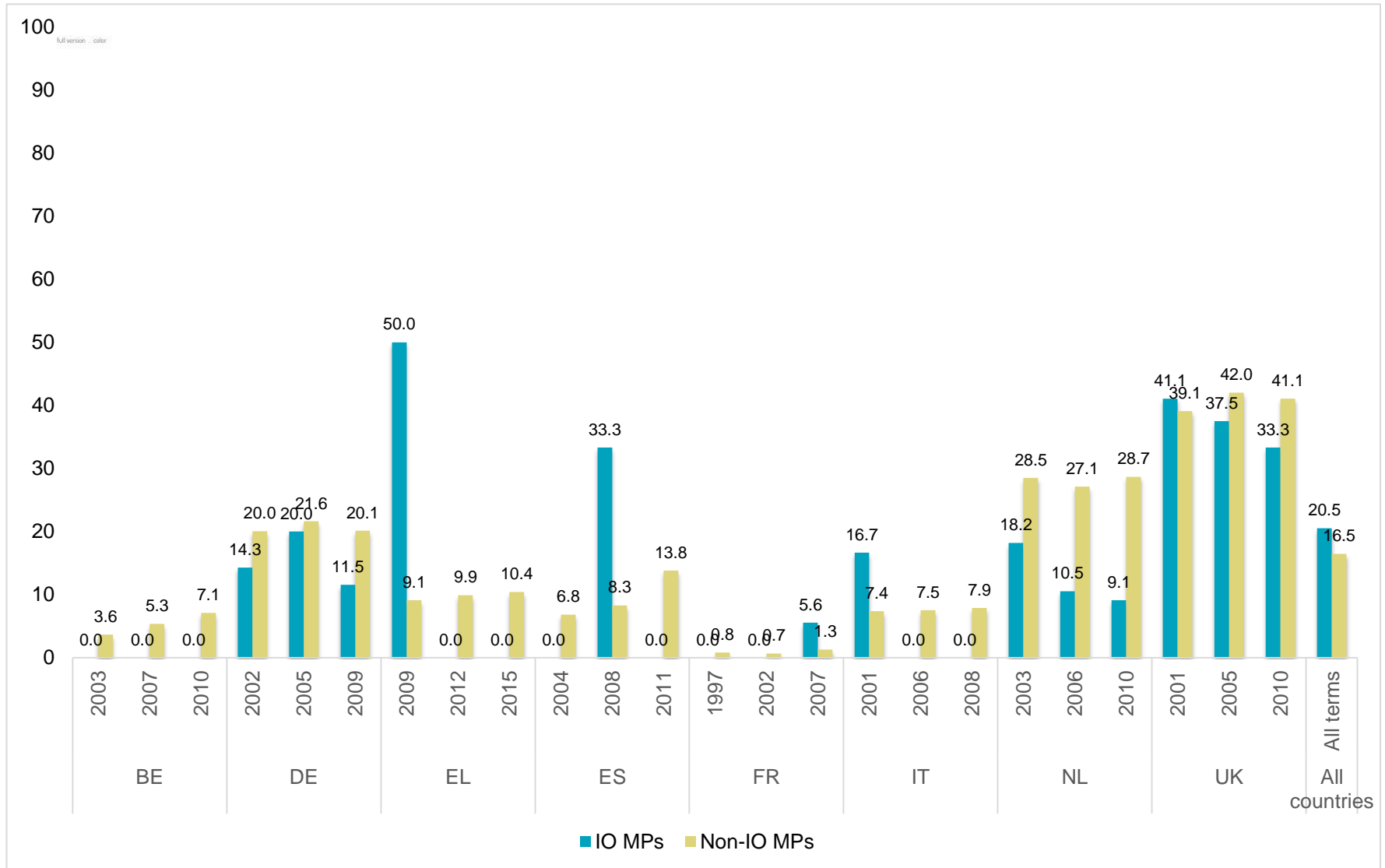


## Access of IO MPs and non-IO MPs to Immigration Related Committees (in percentage)





# Access of IO MPs and non-IO MPs to Parliamentary Party Group Leadership Positions (in percentage)







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# Take Home Message

- Evidence suggests that the representation of IO MPs and non-IO MPs in most relevant committees is not structurally different
- Strategic placement of IO MPs in immigration-related committees: evidence is mixed. Parties do not yet fully use expertise and electoral signaling capacities of those MPs.



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# Take Home Message

- Access to parliamentary party group leadership positions: important cross-sectional variation, but overall trend suggests that IO MPs are still underrepresented
- However, if we think of access to positions of influence as moderated by seniority, then there should be a non-linear time effect in the access to those positions
- Ultimately, this means that it will take a few more legislative terms for IO MPs to have the necessary conditions to access influence positions



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